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ABSTRACT

This problem-based learning unit asks students to assume roles as experts from countries that participated in World War I. These experts will meet both in expert groups and with their respective country representatives to determine what terms, in four specific areas, should be included in the treaty that will formally end the war. Next, they must decide as countries whether they will sign the treaty they have negotiated. Finally, students will compare the treaty they create with the Treaty of Versailles to determine which treaty would most likely ensure long lasting peace in Europe. Students are provided with background information, detailed instructions, and online resources. The teacher's notes explain the unit's correlation to history/social science and language arts standards, suggest day-by-day teaching strategies, present a culminating assessment exercise, and provide an evaluation rubric, a student evaluation form, and a group evaluation form. (BT)

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Schools of California Online Resources for Education (SCORE): Connecting California's Classrooms to the World

Paris Peace Conference: Writing a Treaty to End World War I

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PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE:
Writing a Treaty to End World War I

Photograph from the National Archives
The signing of the Treaty of Versailles

This problem-based learning unit asks students to assume roles as experts from countries that participated in World War I. These experts will meet both in expert groups and with their respective country representatives to determine what terms, in four specific areas, should be included in the treaty which will formally end the war. Next, they must decide as countries whether they will sign the treaty they have negotiated. To conclude the unit, students will compare the treaty they create with the real Treaty of Versailles to determine which treaty would most likely ensure long lasting peace in Europe.

The Task:

You are a citizen from one of the leading countries which fought in World War I: Germany, Russia, France, Great Britain, Italy, or the United States. Because you are an expert in a specific area of study, you have received the following letter, which asks you to help to develop a treaty to end the war.

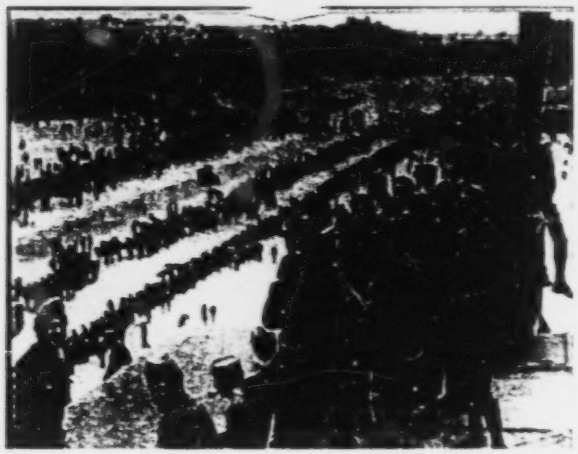
Georges Clemenceau, Premier of France
Chairman of the Peace Conference
Paris France
18 May 1919

Committee Delegate:

The Conference Commission requests your immediate presence in Paris as a delegate to the Paris Peace Conference. After months of deliberation, the Peace Treaty to end the war will undergo formal negotiations in four specific areas beginning 1 June 1919. You and four fellow citizens, experts in the areas of economics, geography, ethics, military history, and international negotiations, have been appointed by your government to represent them in the process. Each country present will be allowed to participate in a seven day review and deliberation of the terms of the peace.

Your timely presence in Paris by 1 June 1919 will allow your country to be heard. As Chairman of the Peace Conference, I assure you that your task will be difficult, but of supreme importance to the future of Europe and the world. We must remember what defeat would have cost us, and what peace must assure us.

Georges Clemenceau
Premier of France



The Process:

In order to understand the position your country takes at the end of this "war to end all wars", it is necessary to provide the Conference Committee with a statement of purpose. At your initial meeting your country is to ascertain what resources you may need, and discuss where you may find them. You will have two days to research the views of experts from your country and from any sources you may wish to consult, including those listed below and others available in our fine library. In three days your group will present aloud and in writing a one page letter of intent to the Committee, explaining your country's position as you enter expert negotiations. What has World War I meant to your country? What do you hope these negotiations will accomplish?

Next, **experts** will be asked to meet with fellow expert representatives of all of the countries present at the Conference. Each country has enlisted its finest minds to discuss the topics of reparations, territorial changes, military power, ethics, and world affairs. While experts should primarily consider the intentions of their own country, they should also consider what effects the terms of this treaty may have upon future world relationships. You will research and negotiate the following terms:

Economists, you will help determine what costs were incurred because of the War, and what amount of reparations, if any, should be paid.

Geographers, You will help determine what territorial boundaries will be established as provisions of the Treaty.

Ethicists, you will determine which, if any country, is responsible for causing the War.

Military Experts, you will determine what restrictions or regulations upon military power will be required by theTreaty.

Ambassadors, you will be spokesperson for your group at all Conference meetings. You may call upon experts to support your testimony. You are responsible for the

scheduling of tasks, to be certain your country complies with the Official Conference Agenda. At expert meetings you may speak only to your delegates.

Fact Finding Tasks

Following expert negotiations, each country will meet to review the treaty created by your experts. You will decide whether your country will or will not sign the Treaty. On June 28, 1919 the Treaty will be ceremoniously signed at the Palace of Versailles. Each country will deliver a one minute address to be broadcast on radios throughout the world, justifying your decision. A written copy should be provided for the world press.

Resources:

In addition to your textbook, encyclopedias, and other books available to you, the following internet sources will help you to complete this task.

W.W.I Causes (Links From SCORE H-SS)
http://score.rims.k12.ca.us/cgi-bin/DB_Search/db_search.cgi?setup_file=resource10_db.setup.cgi&grade10=10_6&submit_search=Submit+These+Search+Parameters
A collection of links to web sites that provide information about W.W.I and its cause.

The Peace Settlements: Treaty of Versailles
http://www.history.sfasu.edu/WarHistory6.html
Overview of the events and decisions made at the W.W.I Peace Conference.

The Great War Interviews: Woodrow Wilson
http://www.pbs.org/greatwar/interviews/wohl3.html
Comments by the scholar Robert Wohl, University of California on U.S. President Woodrow Wilson and his attitudes toward the peace settlements.

The Economic Consequences of Peace
http://socserv2.socsci.mcmaster.ca/~econ/ugcm/3ll3/keynes/peace.htm
Explanation of how the W.W.I Peace Treaty relates to economics, by the famous economist John Maynard Keynes.

The Versailles Treaty and Related Documents
http://ac.acusd.edu/History/text/versaillestreaty/vercontents.html
In addition to the complete Versailles Peace Treaty, this web site has many related documents, such as maps, charts, photos, cartoons, and links to information.

The Truth About the Treaty
http://raven.cc.ukans.edu/~libsite/wwi-www/treatytruth/tardieu03.htm
French explanation of how the W.W.I Peace Treaty affected the countries.

Armies Mobilized and Casualties: 1914-18
http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/FWWdeaths.htm
Figures on W.W.I armies are available here.

French Property Losses (1914-1918)
http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/FWWproperty.htm
Figures on W.W.I property losses of France are available here.

Financial Cost of War http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/FWWcosts.htm
Figures on W.W.I costs are available here.

The World War I Document Archive http://www.lib.byu.edu/~rdh/wwi/
An archive of primary documents from World War I.

W.W.I Sites: Links to Other Resources http://www.lib.byu.edu/~rdh/wwi/links.html
Lots of connections to resources about W.W.I.

President Wilson and W.W.I
http://www.msstate.edu:80/Archives/History/USA/WWI/mccarth1.art
A version of how the war began.

World War I - Trenches on the Web http://www.worldwar1.com/
A collection of W.W.I resources.

Learning Advice:

This section is here to help students stay on the right track, so that you will be prepared for the discussions, debates, and voting which will occur over the next ten days. Your country's future depends upon your careful negotiations. First, remember that your highest priority is the welfare of your country. You must carefully research what has happened to your country in World War I so that you will know what you want to achieve. Your letter of intent will explain to the rest of the countries what you hope to accomplish during these negotiations.

When you move into the expert group phase you will write specific terms for the treaty based upon your knowledge in this area, as outlined in THE PROCESS section. When you go to the link on Day 5 below you will find a task to complete which will prepare you to meet with other experts and write terms for the treaty. You will negotiate with other experts and vote your expert group's terms.

On Day 8 you will be reunited with your country groups. This will be your opportunity to explain the terms you have created in expert groups and to review the treaty created with each expert group's terms. Now, you will have to decide as a country whether you will sign this treaty. Your country will discuss this and take a vote.

Your last task as a country is to write a statement which your ambassador will deliver to the world press, who are anxiously awaiting your decision. This statement should explain your reaction to the negotiations, the treaty, and why you have made the decision to sign (or not sign) the treaty.

Your Agenda:

Please review this schedule as all meetings will begin promptly as scheduled. Extra space is provided on each daily agenda for tasks you may wish to add to help accomplish your goal: creating the best treaty possible.

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Review agenda Country meetings	Library Research	Library Research	Presentation: Letter of Intent Expert Committees	Experts: Library Research and Fact Finding
Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10
Individual Expert Treaty Terms due Presentation of suggested terms to Expert Groups Discussion	Experts Discuss, Develop and Write Treaty terms Each Expert group will adopt Treaty terms by majority vote	Country Meetings Experts Present Terms to their countries Country Delegations : Vote and provide written justification	Press Conference Venn Diagram Treaty of Versailles	Written Response Unit evaluation

Teacher Notes

Grade Level/Unit:

World History Grade 10, The Treaty of Versailles

California Content Standards:

History Social Science Standard:
10:6. Students analyze the effects of the First World War, in terms of: 1. The aims and negotiating roles of world leaders, the terms and influence of the Treaty of Versailles and Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points, and the causes and effects of U.S. rejection of the League of Nations on world politics.

Language Arts Standards:
Comprehension and Analysis 9/10:2.5. Students extend ideas in primary or secondary sources through original analysis, evaluation and elaboration.

Writing Strategies 9/10: 1.0. Students write coherent and focused texts that convey a well-defined perspective and tightly-reasoned argument. Student writing demonstrates awareness of audience and purpose and use of the stages of the writing process, as needed.

Speaking Applications 9/10: 2.5. Students deliver persuasive arguments (including evaluation and analysis of problems and solutions and causes and effects).

History-Social Science Thinking and Analysis Skills:

This unit utilizes and builds upon the following skills:

Historical Interpretation:

3. Students interpret past events within the context in which an event unfolded rather than solely in terms of present day norms and values.

4. Students understand the meaning, implication, and impact of historical events while recognizing that events could have taken other directions.

Historical research, Evidence and Point of View:

3. Students evaluate major debates among historians concerning alternative interpretations of the past, including an analysis of

authors' use of evidence and the distinctions between sound generalizations and misleading oversimplifications.

Unit Duration:

10 school hours, 3-4 of these require the use of computers.

Teaching Steps

Students should be placed in heterogeneous groups of five and each assigned a different expert role.

Each group of five will represent a country which participated in World War I. The number of countries present should be based upon class size.

Begin by downloading copies of the letter and addressing them to each student with their role/country indicated in the address, or by having students read the letters online.

On Day One the class should review their tasks, agenda and evaluation rubric.

Important! Although Germany and Russia were not present as participants during the conference, it is effective to have students research their opinions of the peace terms and participate in the treaty making process. On the day when students from these countries justify their decision to sign the Treaty, reveal to Germany that they have no choice but to accept the terms imposed upon them. Russia may not sign the Treaty, nor may they accept reparations or new territory.

Days Two and Three: Early on and throughout the unit, students should be encouraged to put themselves into the position of a citizen of the country they represent. What have been the costs and benefits of the war from their perspective? Writing the letter of intent will help groups formalize their thoughts and become a cohesive group.

Days Four and Five: Review the specific tasks each expert should perform, listed on the Agenda Day Five link.

Days Six and Seven: In my experience, it works best if the Ambassadors are allowed to roam and act as assistants to experts, but must follow this rule for these two days only: Ambassadors may only speak to experts from their country. At the end of Day Seven the Treaty Terms will need to be put together to create the Treaty for review by each country.

Day Eight: Experts will explain the deliberations over terms to their country and determine whether or not it is in the best interest of their country to sign the treaty. Countries should decide by majority vote if they cannot decide by concensus.This is when you have the difficult task of revealing to Germany and Russia that theyhave no choice in the matter. Students should then help the Ambassador prepare and rehearse

the statement they will give to the world press the next day.

Day Nine: Ambassadors will read a statement to the class in a mock press conference. Each country will have determined whether or not they want to sign the treaty. As a class, have the students create a large Venn Diagram of their Treaty and the actual Treaty of Versailles, comparing only the areas students have researched with this project.

Culminating Assessment:

On Day Ten, have the students respond in writing to the following prompt, using the Venn Diagram as a resource, in addition to any notes they may want to use.

In the Fourteen Points speech Woodrow Wilson delivered to the Congress of the United States on January 18, 1918, Wilson stated:

> "What we demand in this war, therefore, is nothing peculiar to ourselves. It is that the world be made fit and safe to live in; and particularly that it be made safe for every peace loving nation which, like our own, wishes to live its own life, determine its own institutions, be assured of justice and fair dealing by other peoples of the world as against force and selfish aggression. All the peoples of the world are in effect partners in this interest, and for our own part we see very clearly that unless justice be done to others it will not be done to us."

Write a one page essay explaining which treaty would most likely ensure long lasting peace in Europe, using information you have learned in this project, using specific details to support your position.

Credits:

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If you would like to respond to me with comments about this unit, I would appreciate your input. You may email me at gniles@cmc.net .

Evaluation

The following rubric may be used to evaluate your contribution to this task.

Categories	Exceptional	Superior	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory
Group Interaction	Excellent communication skills; group work builds upon individual effort; responsibility shared evenly; students clearly perform roles	Good listening/speaking skills; positive discussions and feedback; most students participate	Some ability to work together; group discusses and creates solutions; some students participate	Infrequent discussions; one person does all of the work; little or no participation by others
Use of Resources	Uses & refers to at least 8 varied sources as evidence to support claims	Uses and refers to at least 6 sources to support work	Uses and refers to at least 4 sources to support work	Bases work upon opinion only
Creativity	Both letter & press statement are interesting & engaging; shows insight; clever solutions to task	Interesting; some aspects of the project display insight	Completes the task but without regard for uniqueness or flair	Sketchy, incomplete, unfocused presentation
Content	Focused, historically accurate, detailed	Well thought out, historically accurate, addresses major points	Addresses most of the task, only minor errors, historically accurate	Incomplete task, historical errors
Presentation	Obviously practiced, eye contact, clear understanding of all concepts, typed when appropriate, almost no grammatical or spelling errors	Rehearsed, some eye contact, can discuss all topics, written work looks nice and has few written errors	Good delivery of the information, knows most topics, neatly written, some written errors	Unpracticed, reads information, illegible and/or many errors
Individual Essay	Takes a stand & supports it with specifics from both treaties, well organized, thoughtful and interesting to read, less than three grammatical errors	Opinion is clear but supported with only a few examples, organized, less than five grammatical errors	Either no opinion or no specific examples, wanders but makes some good points, at least one page in length	No opinion, no details from either treaty, less than one page in length, many grammatical errors

Student Evaluation Form

Name: Class:

Country: Expert Role

Categories	Exceptional	Superior	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory
Group Interaction				
Use of Resources				
Creativity				
Content				
Presentation				
Individual Essay				

Group Evaluation Form

Name: Class:

Country: Expert Role

Complete the following sentences.

Some things our group did which contributed to our success were…

Our group would have worked together better if…

Using the rubric to help make your decision, grade each group member's contributions, including your own, as Exceptional, Superior, Acceptable or Unsatisfactory.
I think (NAME) did (Exceptional, Superior, Acceptable or Unsatisfactory) work because…

I think _____ did _____work because…

I think _____ did _____work because…

I think _____ did _____work because…

I think _____ did _____work because…